

# *“The Lex-Plan 2013”*

## *EXISTING LAND USE*

In order for a community to plan for future land uses and land use changes, knowledge of existing land uses must be established. The purpose of this section of the Plan is to establish an inventory and evaluation of the existing land uses found within the Lexington planning area. This does not take into account future land use or land ownership.

Land use categories that will be used to plan for future development areas are general statements about how the underlying property is being used. These are generally described with broad labels such as residential, commercial, and industrial, as well as an identification of vacant or open spaces being used for cropland, recreational areas, and any under- or non-developed land. In order to fully explain the variety of uses currently found, the description used in this section will include more detailed statements.

Land uses and properties do not have to be arranged in a 1:1 ratio with one land use per parcel. Uses are often mingled within a development, and can be stacked on each other, such as in a Downtown building that is used for residential uses on upper floors and commercial uses on the ground floor. The number and type of land uses found in a vibrant community is constantly changing to meet the needs and desires of residents, which can produce a number of impacts that either benefit or detract from the overall sense of community and quality of life. Because of this, the success and sustainability of a community is directly influenced by the manner in which available resources are utilized given the constraints the city faces during the course of the planning period.

Typically, older Midwest communities exhibit a fixed pattern of land use that is fairly consistent with a rural setting's relaxed pace. Lexington, however, is experiencing increasing levels of growth and development pressures, and has seen its surroundings transform from the more common rural setting found throughout Nebraska to an urbanizing extension. The proximity to I-80 and Highway 30, as well as its location along Highway 21, provide Lexington with many more opportunities than would be found in a typical town of the same size. The opportunities that result from such external forces create impacts upon the community and its residents, which can drastically affect the land use in and around the Lexington area and will significantly impact how and where Lexington grows in the future.

## Existing Land Use Categories

Land uses are generally best described in terms of specific categories that provide broad descriptions into which numerous businesses, institutions, and structures are grouped.

Lexington's existing land use categories are more specific to allow for a more detailed evaluation of each use. For the purposes of "The Lex-Plan 2013," the following land use classifications are used:

**Agriculture / Open Space** – A parcel of land that is not intended for development and is currently used for low intensity agriculture uses, such as pasturing, or contains open spaces such as woodlands or flood plain.

**Developing Residential** – A parcel of land that is currently undeveloped and not proposed for development. This may be subdivided and undergo preparations for residential development. This land is generally found to be open and minimally maintained.

**Single-Family Residential** – A parcel of land where each residential structure is occupied by one family, such as a traditional home on its own lot, surrounded by yards on all sides.

**Multi-Family Residential** – A parcel of land containing a structure being utilized by two or more families within a same structure.

**Residential Mobile Home** – A parcel of land containing a factory-built, single-family structure. These uses are Single-Family Residential in nature, but identified separately.

**Commercial** – A parcel of land containing a commercial use which may sell a good, but mostly provides a service, such as automotive repair, hair salon, and includes the Downtown.

**Industrial** – A parcel of land containing a commercial use involved in manufacturing or packing, storage, or assembly of products, which does not have a major external effect on surrounding properties or uses.

**Parks and Recreation** – A parcel of land containing public or private land available for recreational, educational, cultural, or aesthetic use.

**Public/Quasi-Public** – A parcel of land owned or maintained by a federal, state, or a local governmental entity and open for enjoyment by public, or a parcel of land containing a use that is generally under the control of a private, religious, or non-profit entity, that provides social benefit to the community as a whole.

### Existing Land Use Analysis

Lexington’s existing land uses were evaluated and tabulated, showing the quantity of uses found within the corporate limits as well as within the entire planning jurisdiction. The data was arranged using total acres of each type of Land Use displayed in Table 35.

Not surprisingly, the majority of developed land within Lexington is used for single family residential purposes. In 2013, nearly one-half of all developed property in Lexington was used for single-family dwellings. In terms of total acres, single-family uses in 2013 accounted for 598.87 acres. The remaining components of residential uses represented much smaller portions of the land use picture. Residential uses with two or more units accounted for 2.6 percent of all developed land within Lexington in 2013. There are a number of contiguous residential developments surrounding Lexington which give the community the potential to alter the residential land use figures if these areas were to be annexed in the future.

Type of Land Use	Land Use Counts	Acres
Agriculture / Open Space	48	537.82
Commercial	318	195.86
Developing Residential	147	143.88
Industrial	101	171.04
Multi-Family Residential	42	46.41
Parks and Recreation	18	99.08
Public / Quasi Public	73	532.65
Residential Mobile Home	52	50.65
Single Family Residential	2563	598.87
<b>Total</b>		<b>2376.25</b>
<i>Streets/Railroads</i>		<i>540.75</i>
<b>Corp Limits Acres</b>		<b>2917.00</b>

Source: 2013 Comprehensive Development Plan, JEO Consulting Group, Inc

Table 35: Land Use within Corporate Limits, Lexington, 2013

Overall, commercial uses in 2013 covered just over 195.86 acres, or nearly 12 percent of all developed land. Total acres put to industrial uses nearly equaled those put to commercial use, and accounted for approximately 10 percent of all developed land in 2012.

Public and quasi-public land uses accounted for nearly 30 percent of all developed land in 2013, second only to single-family residential. Parks and recreation acres accounted for the third smallest acreage, covering just over 99 acres in 2013.

Transportation uses, which include rights-of-way, railroads, and roadway systems, accounted for 18.6 acres of undeveloped land and 0.8 percent of total acreage in 2013. Undeveloped land, including transportation, agricultural uses, open space, and developing residential property accounted for 30 percent of all land within Lexington, compared to 70 percent for developed land.

Land Use Type	Land Use Count	Acres Of Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
<b>Agricultural/Industrial</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>344.55</b>
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>78.11</b>
<b>Developing Residential</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>91.24</b>
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>838.31</b>
<b>Parks and Recreation</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100.04</b>
<b>Public/Quasi Public</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>147.7</b>
<b>Residential</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>500.26</b>
<i>Single Family</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>438.04</i>
<i>Multifamily</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3.25</i>
<i>Mobile Home</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>58.97</i>
<b>Agriculture/Open Space</b>		<b>24,180.72</b>
Source: 2013 Comprehensive Development Plan, JEO Consulting Group, Inc.		

Table 36: Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Land Use, Lexington, 2013

Lexington currently exercises its statutory authority to enforce planning jurisdiction within two miles of the corporate boundary. An evaluation of land uses within this extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) is important for future development and planning activities. The land uses found outside of the corporate limits are mostly agriculture, agricultural residential, and single-family residential, especially to the east of the community. Due to external and internal development pressures, as well as the proximity of major transportation routes, the percentage of residential uses found within the Lexington ETJ is higher than would be typical for a Midwestern community of this size.

In addition, all land uses that are found within Lexington are also found within the ETJ. This pattern is also influenced by the urban nature of the area, as well as the land use policies Lexington has held over time. The presence of all the same land use types in the ETJ will encourage greater development activity, which in turn can influence Lexington's ability to annex and grow at an increased rate over communities located in more rural settings.

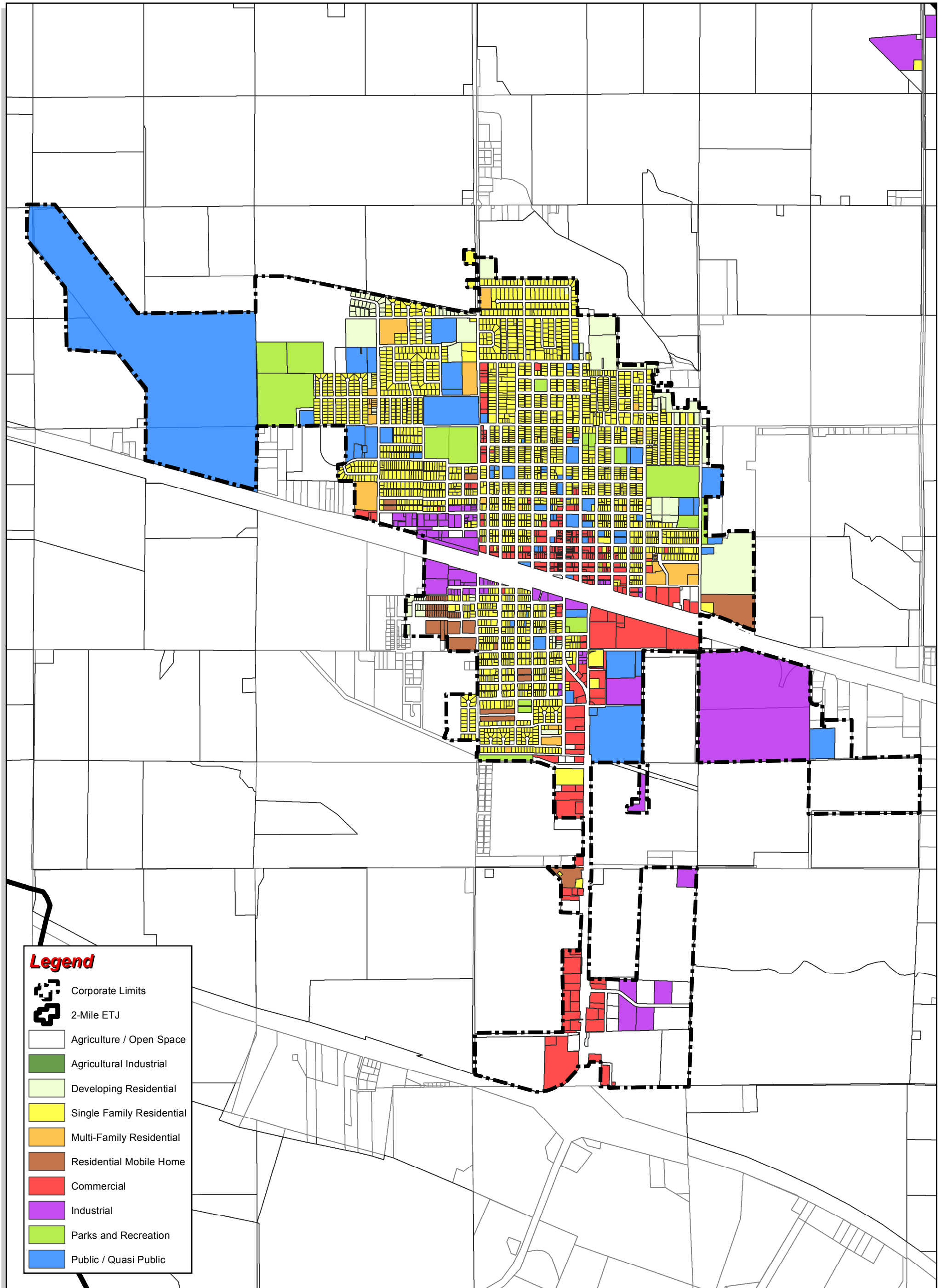
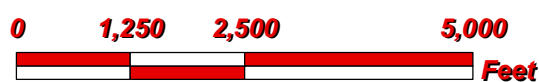


Figure 25: Existing Land Use within Corporate Limits

**City of Lexington**  
**Dawson County, Nebraska**

**Existing Land Use Map**  
**Corporate Limits**



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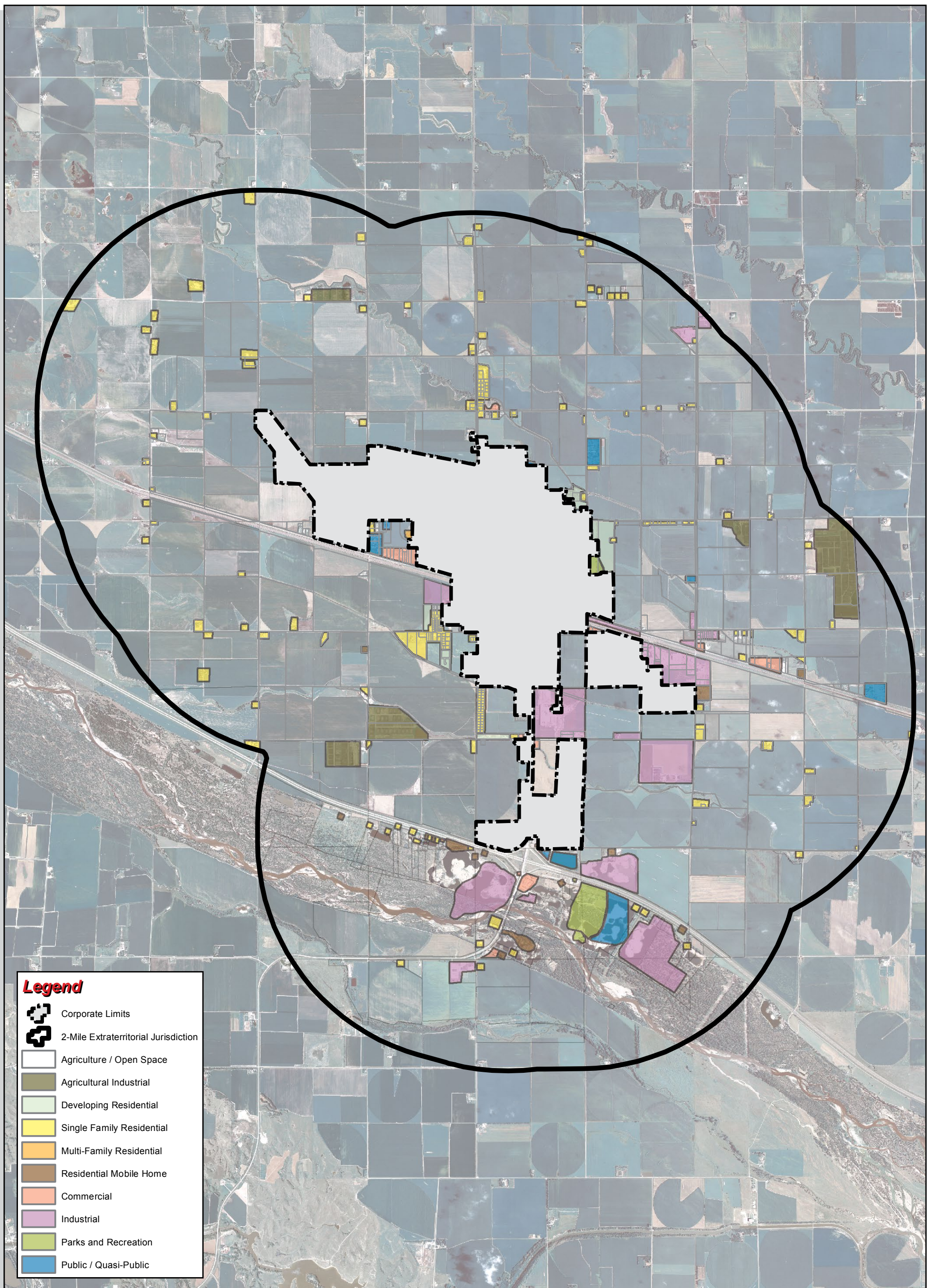
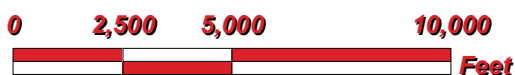


Figure 25b: Existing Land Use, Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

**City of Lexington**  
**Dawson County, Nebraska**

**Existing Land Use Map**  
**Extraterritorial Jurisdiction**



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